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SUBJECT: MFA ON NATO SECGEN,S FAREWELL VISIT AND NRC

Classified By: Pol-Mil Counselor Anthony Godfrey, 1.4 (b,d)

11. (C) Summary: NATO and Euro-Atlantic Security Affairs Department Head Gulhan Ulutekin provided a readout of NATO Sec Gen Jaap de Hoop Scheffer,s June 8 farewell visit to Turkey and briefed us on Turkey,s position regarding the NATO Russia Council (NRC). She also confirmed that the MFA is coordinating with Rasmussen,s staff to include Ankara in Rasmussen,s initial visit to Allied capitals as the new NATO SecGen. End Summary.

12. (C) NATO SecGen de Hoop Scheffer met with President Gul, PM Erdogan, FM Davutoglu, CHOD Basbug, and DefMin Gonul during this June 8 farewell visit to Ankara. NATO and Euro-Atlantic Security Affairs Department Head Gulhan Ulutekin reported that although the visit was mostly a formality, there were two substantive issues discussed during de Hoop Scheffer,s meetings with FM Davutoglu: Turkish representation in the group of "Wise Men" that will help prepare NATO,s new Strategic Concept, and Turkish concerns about NATO headquarters reform currently being debated. Ulutekin said the GOT nominated former Turkish PermRep to NATO Ambassador Umit Pamir as a member of the group of Wise Men that would help shape the Strategic Concept, and said de Hoop Scheffer signaled to FM Davutoglu that Pamir,s candidacy will be accepted.

Headquarters Reforms

13. (C) FM Davutoglu took the opportunity to raise GOT concerns about proposals to reform NATO headquarters, according to Ulutekin. While the GOT supported efforts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of NATO, Davutoglu stressed that the "consensus principle" is paramount for Turkey. Ulutekin said proposals to do away with the "consensus principle" at lower levels of NATO may create the unintended consequence of overloading the North Atlantic Council with proposals that have not been fully debated and vetted by all Allies.

14. (C) With respect to the civilian budget, Ulutekin said Turkey understood the rationale for empowering the SecGen with more executive authority, including greater flexibility in shifting funds between line items in the civilian budget. Ulutekin, however, noted that the current SecGen already has some flexibility in this regard. Without specifying a threshold, Ulutekin said FM Davutoglu told de Hoop Scheffer that the new SecGen should consult Allies when "significant amounts" of the budget are being shifted. Ulutekin said de Hoop Scheffer expressed appreciation for Turkey's constructive role in the Alliance, particularly with respect to Afghanistan and Kosovo.

15. (C) Ulutekin also touched on the MFA,s preparations for the incoming NATO SecGen Rasmussen. She said Rasmussen is now "our Secretary General," and Turkey would "support him constructively." The MFA has been in contact with Ambassador

Jasper Vahr, former Danish ambassador to Turkey and Rasmussen,s choice to be the director of his Private Office, and has encouraged Rasmussen, through Vahr, to include Ankara as a stop in his initial round of visits to Allied capitals as the new SecGen. She said Vahr has sent positive signals to the MFA and Turkey is expecting a visit by the new SecGen toward the end of August.

NRC: Davutoglu to Attend

16. (C) Raising NRC briefly, Ulutekin welcomed the Alliance decision to engage with Russia through the NRC at the level of foreign ministers. She said Turkey has consistently supported maintaining open channels with Russia, not as a favor to the Russians, but to ensure that dialogue occurs between Russia and the Alliance, particularly when there are "tough issues" with Russia. Referencing a draft document circulating among Allies, Ulutekin said Turkey supports the proposal to include Afghanistan, counter-narcotics, counterterrorism and nonproliferation as priorities on the NRC agenda. She noted Turkey,s proposal in NATO for the NRC to also include informal events, such as coffees and "Away Days", to add a dimension to the often stilted dynamic of formal NRC discussions and create opportunities for informal exchanges of views. She confirmed that FM Davutoglu intends to participate in the NRC meeting following the informal meeting of OSCE foreign ministers in Corfu.

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